

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 07601 081030Z

ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 PM-05 NSC-05

/055 W

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P R 080956Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6270

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, MPOL, KS, US

SUBJECT: KOREAN PRESS REACTION TO PRM-10

REF: STATE 213880

SUMMARY: YESTERDAY'S EVANS AND NOVAK COLUMN GETS TOP PRESS  
PLAY IN KOREA TODAY, WITH ONE ANALYSIS SPECULATING THAT  
LEAK OF PARTS OF PRM-10 MAY BE DESIGNED TO AFFECT DISPOSI-  
TION OF PAK TONG-SON CASE. END SUMMARY.

1. BOTH VERNACULAR MORNING DAILIES SEPTEMBER 8 GAVE TOP  
COVERAGE TO STORIES FROM THEIR WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENTS  
ABOUT EVANS AND NOVAK COLUMN ON PRESIDENTIAL REVIEW  
MEMORANDUM TEN (PRM-10) WHICH APPEARED IN WASHINGTON POST  
SEPTEMBER 7. ACCORDING TO ARTICLES, THIS COLUMN, ENTITLED  
"PRM-10 AND THE U.S. WITHDRAWAL", REVEALED THAT THE  
WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. TROOPS FROM KOREA WOULD PROVIDE U.S.  
"FLEXIBILITY" IN DECIDING WHETHER TO BECOME INVOLVED  
IN CASE OF AN ATTACK BY NORTH KOREA: "AFTER THE WITH-  
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PAGE 02 SEOUL 07601 081030Z

DRAWAL, THE DANGER OF AUTOMATIC INVOLVEMENT WOULD BE  
MINIMIZED." COLUMN POINTED OUT THAT THIS CONTRADICTS  
PRESIDENT CARTER'S PLEDGE NOT TO DEGRADE THE U.S.  
COMMITMENT TO KOREA AND ALSO DAMAGES PRESENT DEFENSE  
PLANS, WHICH ARE BASED ON THE DEFENSE OF SEOUL. COLUMN  
SAYS THAT KOREA IS THUS PLACED IN A DILEMMA AS TO WHAT  
TO BELIEVE: THE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS OF U.S. LEADERS

OR THE SECRET DOCUMENTS PREPARED BY THEIR PROFESSIONAL ACVISORS.

2. COVERAGE IN NATIONALISTIC CHOSON ILBO WAS LIMITED TO ONE BRIEF STORY ALONG ABOVE LINES, BUT HAN'GUK ILBO RAN MORE DETAILED STORY, TOGETHER WITH THREE COMPANION PIECES. FIRST OF THESE REPORTED THAT DEPARTMENT SPOEKESMAN HODDING CARTER CITED COMMON PRACTICE OF REFUSING TO COMMENT ON AN INTERNAL DOCUMENT UNDER DICUSSION WITHIN USG AND ADDED THAT CARTER HAD NOTED THERE WAS NO CHANGE IN U.S. COMMITMENT TO DEFEND AND SUPPORT ROK UNDER DEFENSE TREATY. RELATED ARTICLE ON PAGE TWO GIVES DETAILED SUMMARY OF EVANS-NOVAK COLUMN.

3. MOST SIGNIFICANT IS FRONT-PAGE COMMENTARY IN HAN'GUK ILBO, ATTRIBUTED TO WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT CHO SUN-HWAN. FIRST PART OF ANALYSIS NOTES STRONG EMPHASIS IN PRM-10 ON U.S. INTENTION NOT RPT NOT TO BE DRAWN INTO ASIAN LAND WAR AND ASSERTS THERE NEED BE NO GREAT PROBLEM WITH PRM-10, WHEN ONE NOTES IT IS BASED ON ASSUMPTION OF WORLD WAR, AND HAS NO RELATION TO SORT OF LIMITED WAR WHICH MIGHT OCCUR IN KOREAN PENINSULA. LATTER HALF OF COMMENT, HOWEVER, NOTING THAT EVANS-NOVAK COLUMN IN PAST HAS BEEN SHARPLY CIRITICAL OF CARTER ADMINISTRATION, GOES ON TO SPECULATE WHY AND HOW PRM-10 GOT OUT. NOTING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 SEOUL 07601 081030Z

THAT PREVIOUS EVANS-NOVAK REPORT THAT PRM-10 ENVISAGED POSSIBLE LOSS OF ONE-THIRD OF GERMANY IN EVENT OF SOVIET ATTACK HAD BEEN EVALUATED BY NEW YORK TIMES AS LEADING TO THREE-PERCENT INCREASE IN U.S. DEFENSE BUDGET AND NEW POLICY TO SGRENGTHEN CONVENTIONAL U.S. FORCES, ANALYST SPECULATES THT INTENTIONAL LEAK OF MATERIAL ON KOREA IN PRM-10,"WHICH WILL SURPRISE AND SCARE KOREAN GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC AND ENCOURAGE THE NORTHERN PUPPETS," MAY REFLECT INTENT TO AFFECT DISPOSITION OF PAK TONG-SON CASE.

4. EMBASSY CONTACTS HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TO EXPRESS CONCERN TO EMBOFFS ABOUT EFFECTS OF NEWS STORIES BASED ON EVANS AND NOVAK. PROFESSOR YI YONG-HO TOLD EMBOFF SEPT 8 THAT A NUMBER OF HIS COLLEAGUES HAD EXPRESSED CONCERN AND CONFUSION ABOUT IMPLICATIONS OF STORIES TO EFFECT US WAS RESTUDYING TIS DEFENSE LINE IN ASIA. HE URGED THAT USG CLARIFY NATURE OF PRM PROCESS. EMBASSY HAS ALREADY DONE THIS INDIRECTLY, PROVIDING EXPLANATION TO MOFA OFFICIAL AT TIME OF LAST EVANS AND NOVAK ARTICLE. MOFA THEN PROVIDED THIS EXPLANATION TO ROK PRESS. FURTHER EXPLANATORY EFFORT MAY NOW BEEN NECESSARY HOWEVER. IN VIEW OF ROK

INCLINATION TO IDENTIFY PRM TEN OPTIONS WITH US  
DECISIONS PRIOR TO US WITHDRAWAL FROM KOREA JUST  
BEFORE KOREAN WAR, DEPARTMENT MAY ALSO WISH TO  
MAKE SPECIAL EFFORT TO EXPLAIN PRM PROCESS TO KOREAN  
CORRESPONDENTS IN WASHINGTON.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009